DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 035 CE 050 246

TITLE	Second Corporate Plan.
INSTITUTION	TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, Payneham (Australia).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-86397-171-7
PUB DATE	Oct 87
NOTE	33p.
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Clearinghouses; *Educational Planning; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; Information Networks; *Organizational Development; *Organizational Objectives; *Research and Development Centers
IDENTIFIERS	Australia; *TAFE National Centre for Research and Development

ABSTRACT

The Technical and Further Education (TAFE) National Centre for Research and Development has two broad areas of activity: the undertaking and encouragement of research and development projects that are of national significance to TAFE and the dissemination of information on research and development in TAFE. The center issued its first corporate plan in 1985. This second corporate plan is intended to outline the center's main goals for the next 2 to 3 years. During that time the center will seek to maintain its reputation for research and development by working closely with its network, but especially with the Conference of TAFE Directors. The center will continue its concern for economical operation and cost-effectiveness and will maintain its present management structures and decision-making processes. Its four main approaches to research and its commitment to staff development will be maintained. Nonprint approaches to dissemination will be investigated and tested, and the center's international reputation as an applied research organization will be strengthened. (Appendixes include a statement of the center's aims; a list of center board members; and flowcharts illustrating the center's project approval process, procedures for funding commissioned and externally funded projects, the center's management structure, and its information network.) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED295035

TAFE

TAFE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

SECOND CORPORATE PLAN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE 050 346

ISBN 0 86397 171 7

Published by:

TAFE National Centre for
Research and Development Ltd.
296 Payneham Road
Payneham, S.A. 5070.

(Incorporated in South Australia)

SECOND CORPORATE PLAN

Adelaide, October 1987

SECOND CORPORATE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This document is written in the same way as the first Corporate Plan with an emphasis on strategic goals to be achieved during the next 2-3 years. These goals are underlined and are also listed in the Summary which starts on page 18. This Plan focuses on the Centre's research and development, on dissemination of the Centre's research results, on the strengthening of the Centre's national and international links and on its accommodation needs.

THE CENTRE

The TAFE National Centre for Research and Development Ltd. is a South Australian registered company limited by guarantee, with eight members: the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Technical and Further Education (TAFE). The Centre is a small organisation employing, in total, 15 people (full-time, part-time, seconded and contract), one-half of whom conduct research. Some research is commissioned to other organisations - mainly TAFE Authorities. Research support is provided by a Librarian/Clearinghouse Officer, the Assistant Director, a half-time Finance Officer and word processing staff.

The Centre's aims are shown in Appendix 1. There are two broad areas of activity: the undertaking and encouragement of research and development projects that are of national significance to TAFE, and the dissemination of information on research and development in TAFE.

The Centre's budget is just over $1 million. Income is derived from three main sources: a core grant from the Commonwealth Government; core grants from the States and Northern Territory (the total being equal to the Commonwealth Government grant); and funds from other bodies, including private enterprise. The Centre will continue to be economically managed. The Board meets four times each year and there is one committee which meets twice each year.

THE FIRST CORPORATE PLAN

The Centre's first Corporate Plan was published in 1985. Its development followed a recommendation made in the 1984 review of the Centre. The review report contained 33 definite statements about future directions, together with recommendations on Board membership and the Company articles; and all of those statements and recommendations have been, or are being, followed through.

The first Corporate Plan was heavily dependent on the 1984 review. That Plan emphasised the following:

- network of relationships;
- research and development approval mechanisms;
- ways of monitoring change;
- dissemination and training;
- Centre organisational and managerial matters.

It was a short, working document with nineteen statements of intent. All of the intentions have been implemented with the following provisos:

(i) the CPSG Secretariat is now lodged at the CPSG Chairman's State/Territory and so the Centre has no major administrative role to play;

(ii) the general dissemination of overseas research findings throughout TAFE has not been done (except for a number of specific projects).

Both of these are discussed later in this document.

It is interesting to read the first Corporate Plan in the light of changes which have taken place at the Centre since that Plan was published. For example, the raising of additional funds is now regarded as a normal part of the Centre's work; a collegiate approach to Centre management has been developed; the balance of research (previously heavily weighted towards curriculum) has changed; and the Centre is now involved in very major and important national projects.

The first Corporate Plan with its practical goals has been an invaluable working document. Its final paragraph contained the following:

> "The Centre's activities will be monitored by the Board to ensure that the strategic goals are being achieved. The Corporate Plan will be rewritten at intervals of 2-3 years, to ensure that it remains a useful document".

That monitoring has occurred; and this document is the outcome of the rewriting which was foreshadowed. <u>Updated Corporate Plans will continue to be produced every 2-3 years</u>. The next plan, therefore, will be produced in 1990.

THE NEED FOR STABILITY

Whilst organisations need to develop, and to change in order to accommodate those developments, stability is also required so that procedures can operate smoothly and quickly, and so that an organisation can concentrate on its major task rather than devoting an unnecessary amount of time to internal matters. In other words, the process must never be an end in itself.

No research organisation can work effectively unless there is budget stability. Stability in funding is essential for the useful development of medium-term plans. The Centre's core grant is particularly important in providing that stability.

The Centre now has effective and efficient management structures, essential decision-making procedures with an emphasis on collegiality, and a lean committee structure. The methods and processes now in place will be maintained.

The Strategic Planning Committee whose terms of reference were:

(a) to advise the Board on all professional planning matters;

(b) to consider and recommend on all broad project areas;

(c) to prepare for the Board a Corporate Plan

did an essential job in 1985/1986 but the Board has now rearranged its annual schedule and so can assume that Committee's responsibilities, leaving the Research and Development Committee as the only committee. The Research and

Development Committee will continue to meet twice each year, reporting to the Board's June and December meetings.

STAFFING

The Centre needs to have a continuing core of research staff together with positions filled on secondment or contract. The Centre presently functions in this manner although there are deficiencies in the balance of staffing. Continuing efforts will, therefore, be made to correct staffing imbalance. A staffing review will be presented to the June, 1988 Board meeting.

The stable core of permanent staff should cover all of the main research areas which are regularly drawn upon by the Centre (such as evaluation, assessment, curriculum development, statistical analysis, planning, dissemination). The present coverage is minimal for a national research centre such as the TAFE National Centre. There are weaknesses in the areas of labour market research and occupational skills analysis, for example. The number of permanent staff will be reviewed and a paper will be presented to the March, 1988 Board meeting. Further, the Centre will investigate the possibility of funding a fellowship which would rotate between States. A paper will be presented to the November, 1988 Conference of TAFE Directors.

The Centre has been fortunate in attracting good support staff with a strong commitment to the Centre's aims. Both support staff and research staff are encouraged to undertake staff development activities. Centre commitment to staff development will continue. Each year the Executive Director will receive individual staff proposals for development activities.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

APPROACHES TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Centre is now involved in four main approaches to research:

- in-house projects (research funded from the core grant and undertaken by Centre staff);
- outside-funded projects (in-house projects funded by outside bodies and undertaken by Centre staff);
- commissioned projects (research commissioned and funded by the Centre);
- seed research (small scale research commissioned and funded by the Centre).

These approaches will continue.

All Centre research staff (including the Executive and Deputy Directors) conduct research. About 20 in-house projects are current at any one time, and about the same number of commissioned and seed research projects are also conducted (although many are continuations from the previous year or are continued into the following year). Research projects have been selected on a somewhat ad hoc basis in previous years. Future research projects will be selected according to agreed priority areas. The priority areas will be suggested by the Research and Development Committee to the Board. Those selected for 1988-1990 are listed below.

MAJOR RESEARCH AREAS

The Centre now believes that major areas for research should be identified and so the Research and Development Committee, the Board, and the State/Territory Liaison Officers, have been asked for their advice on research areas. As a consequence of these discussions, it has been decided to emphasise the following areas for the 1988/1989 and 1989/1990 (financial) years:

- identifying and evaluating the new technologies whose training will be the responsibility of TAFE;

- adult retraining, particularly as it relates to the need to overcome skill obsolescence and labour market adjustment;

- identifying and evaluating the new technologies for delivering education and training in TAFE;

- improving skill formation techniques and developing better integration of on- and off-the-job education and training;

- identifying vocational education needs in rural areas;

- improving existing TAFE student selection procedures and the quality of assessment of both on- and off-the-job performance;

- developing appropriate approaches (i.e. rapid responses to new course development) to meet labour market needs, including enterprise-based education and training;

- examination of the nature of TAFE, including characteristics, curriculum processes, student population, charter, future. (This would especially lend itself to longitudinal studies);

- the interactions of science, technology and society (the social implications of technological change).

For any project to achieve selection, it

- must be of national significance for TAFE;
- must help to achieve the Centre's aims;
- must be soundly based using competent researchers and developers.

Additionally, seed research should be capable of later expansion into a major project.

The Centre is especially concerned to conduct appropriate longitudinal studies. Of special interest is the possibility of establishing a national TAFE data base (i.e. a research orientated central repository of information about TAFE) which could be an extension of the Clearinghouse.

The areas listed above do not imply that these will be the sole topics for research. Other worthwhile topics which help to support the Centre's general aims will be considered and the Centre will continue to be a vigorous applicant for research grants. Such funding was a new development when the last Plan was produced. Since then the Centre has been especially successful in attracting outside funds and these funds have strengthened the Centre's research efforts.

The Centre will continue to fund at about the same level ($100,000 to $150,000 per year) commissioned research and seed research, believing that both types of research offer valuable in-service training opportunities to TAFE staff. This implies that most of this money will be spent on projects originating from, and to be conducted by, TAFE Authorities. Therefore, the procedures used in awarding these projects will continue.

SELECTION OF PROJECTS

The process used to select all categories of research projects consists of a planning year and a research activity year (which continues into later years for longer projects). The process involves major members of the network. It is working well and will continue. Its only disadvantage is the length of time spent in planning (because of wanting to involve as many members of the network as possible) but the Centre is able to respond promptly to requests when necessary.

Appendix 2 summarises the processes for project selection and approval.

DISSEMINATION

There is little point in conducting research if few people know about the research results. During the past two years the Centre has experimented with numerous approaches to dissemination and these are summarised below. It will be clear that considerable effort goes into dissemination. The existing

level of effort will be maintained with some modification to techniques. The use of various techniques will be monitored to assess cost effectiveness.

GENERAL DISSEMINATION

The following general dissemination is undertaken by the Centre:

(a) running the National Clearinghouse (in close association with the States/Territories) and including all published research in the Educational Resources Instruction Centre (ERIC);

(b) publishing Initiatives in TAFE and Projects in Progress;

(c) distributing the following free literature:

(i) a colour brochure about the Centre and a Clearinghouse brochure;

(ii) a Centre poster;

(iii) a booklet about the Centre's structure etc.;

(iv) the Annual Report;

(v) the Corporate Plan;

(vi) the publications catalogue (in association with Thomas Nelson);

(d) advertising and selling of publications (through our distributors, the Thomas Nelson organisation);

(e) personal letters from the Executive Director to every TAFE college principal, twice each year; material is enclosed for the college;

(f) talks by Centre staff or Liaison Officers to all TAFE teacher trainees; delivering conference papers on Centre research;

(g) articles about the Centre's activities in every edition of the union journal The Australian TAFE Teacher;

(h) material sent regularly to the journals Curriculum Perspectives and Curriculum Concerns;

(j) publishing the Centre journal Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development;

(k) press releases prepared on newsworthy topics.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC DISSEMINATION

For each project the following occurs:

(a) a project profile is distributed widely throughout Australia;

(b) entries are placed in Projects in Progress and Initiatives in TAFE;

(c) (limited) hard copies and (unlimited) microfiche are distributed free of charge across the country (other media used as appropriate);

(d) the Centre's journal contains articles on completed research;

(e) major projects become the topics for workshops held around the country. General workshops are also conducted. Over the last two years, 21 workshops have been held, with all States and Territories participating in the programme. Although much time and effort are needed to prepare and conduct workshops, the Centre does not charge participants. The Centre will continue to mount national workshops.

DISSEMINATION TO SPECIAL GROUPS

As well as the dissemination to the groups listed above (principals, teachers in general and teacher trainers) the following groups are also closely involved:

(a) TAFE Directors (through individual correspondence and meetings, as well as attendance by the Executive Director at the November Australian Conference of TAFE Directors meeting). No research is undertaken unless it has the support of TAFE Directors;

(b) TAFE Principals' Association Executive; material is prepared for the Association's Newsletters;

(c) special interest groups meet at the Centre, such as the Clearinghouse Officers and educational software specialists;

(d) Liaison Officers (copies of all letters to their States/Territories and other relevant information sent weekly); in addition, Liaison Officers meet each February at the Centre.

Liaison Officers have a specially important role. Their terms of reference are:

(a) informing their States/Territories of the Centre's activities;

(b) informing the Centre about relevant State/Territory activities; and

(c) providing feedback to the Centre about the Centre's work.

The general approaches to dissemination will be maintained, although there does need to be some rationalisation of management responsibility for the different approaches. The one approach which has not been successful is the replacement of hard copy with microfiche, and so a new publication policy will be implemented immediately, based on the production of hard copy summary reports and full reports. Additionally, non-print approaches to dissemination will be investigated and trialled. An evaluation of how, and to what extent, Centre publications

are used will be conducted. This evaluation will be conducted in 1989 and a report presented to the June, 1989 Board meeting.

Since the production of the first Corporate Plan, each research project has had its own strategic plan, thus enabling specific resources to be targeted at specific markets. This approach will continue. A much greater awareness of the Centre's activities is developing, particularly amongst TAFE teachers. Greater effort will be made to inform industry/commerce through (for example) trade and training journals.

CLEARINGHOUSE

The National TAFE Clearinghouse is an important vehicle for disseminating research and development findings. Improvements have been made to the Clearinghouse since the first Corporate Plan including:

- removal of delays;
- title index introduced to Initiatives in TAFE;
- data entry to the Australian Education Index upgraded;
- Clearinghouse publicised by means of brochure;
- completion of first Clearinghouse reports in subject areas (small business, computer software);
- all States/Territories now regularly submit material;
- renewed contact with ERIC;
- established contact with Asian and Pacific Skill Development Information Network (APSDIN) and the International Labour Office (ILO) and exchanging information and material in the Asian Pacific region and internationally through the ILO (Geneva) database.

An expansion of the Clearinghouse is desired in order for it to become part of an international network (for which external funding would be required); furthermore, an expansion of its national activities is envisaged. An evaluation of the Clearinghouse is being supported and a plan for the Clearinghouse's future and funding will be developed as a matter of priority. The plan will be presented to the March 1988 Board meeting and the Board's recommendations will then be made to the Conference of TAFE Directors.

TRAINING

The Centre's training role has been achieved by:

- seconding TAFE staff to the Centre for short periods;
- conducting national workshops;
- allocating funds to TAFE staff to conduct commissioned research.

All of these have been previously mentioned and all will continue. Additionally, there are mutual benefits in the Senior Fellowship scheme which is supported by all TAFE authorities, and in encouraging research staff from other organisations (such as CAEs) to spend time at the Centre.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LINKS

The national network is extremely complex, with the Centre being influenced by, and influencing, State/Territory as well as national education and training organisations. Therefore, it is

important to confirm that the Centre's main role will continue to be that of conducting research and development of national significance for technical and further education. The Centre will continue to do this by working closely with the network, but especially with the Conference of TAFE Directors.

One national link with the Curriculum Projects Steering Group (CPSG), has become less formal. This was to be expected as the States/Territories strengthened their own curriculum expertise. The Centre will continue to give whatever support is appropriate to CPSG. This support is summarised below:

(a) acting as a 'clearinghouse' for all CPSG publications and documentation;

(b) providing information about the CPSG (much of this will now be done by the CPSG Secretariat);

(c) preparing and updating the Curriculum Projects Manual;

(d) offering to attend the first National Curriculum Project (NCP) meetings in order to advise on curriculum development matters;

(e) sitting on some NCP advisory committees;

(f) organising and running a two-day annual workshop for all new NCP chairpersons;

(g) providing one member of the CPSG (the Centre Executive Director's nominee);

(h) conducting projects requested by the Australian Conference of TAFE Directors.

Not surprisingly, the Centre is developing an international reputation through visits to, and correspondence with, overseas organisations; through membership of appropriate professional organisations; through its journal, and through the reputation of its research staff. The Centre is organising a major international conference to be held in Adelaide in March, 1989 and this is likely to be a milestone in the Centre's history.

Care must be taken not to permit the Centre's international links to become unduly important. Our network is Australian. Therefore, it may be useful to state which links will, and will not, be strengthened. Firstly, the Centre will seek ways to strengthen its international reputation as an applied research organisation (through publishing, relevant conference attendance etc.). Secondly, the Centre will find ways to disseminate overseas research findings throughout TAFE. Thirdly, Centre staff will keep attuned to overseas developments.

The Centre will not attempt to market its expertise overseas, even on a fee for service basis, believing that it exists to serve Australian needs. Also, some TAFE authorities are already engaged in overseas enterprises. Individual Centre staff may, from time-to-time, be requested to undertake occasional, brief, overseas assignments and these will normally be supported on the basis that full costs (including salaries) will be recouped.

ACCOMMODATION

Since its formation, the Centre has occupied its present accommodation, a century-old restored house. A lot of sentiment is attached to this attractive building, but increasingly it has become obvious that it cannot adequately cope with the Centre's requirements. Therefore, the Board has decided that plans should be made to move into more suitable accommodation by mid-1990. This accommodation will be bought (if a suitable loan can be negotiated) or leased long-term.

SUMMARY

The Centre will seek to maintain its reputation for research and development. The Centre will do this by working closely with its network, but especially with the Conference of TAFE Directors. Management and network decision-making processes are working efficiently; structures are minimal but effective. Research topic foci linked to the dissemination strategy should ensure maximum effectiveness, thus strengthening national and international links. The Centre will continue to be a lean, cost-effective organisation whose business will be to conduct research and development of national significance for technical and further education.

The goals described in the document are listed below:

- the Centre will continue to be economically managed;

- updated Corporate Plans will continue to be produced every 2-3 years;

- the Centre now has effective and efficient management structures, essential decision-making procedures with an emphasis on collegiality, and a lean committee structure. The methods and processes now in place will be maintained;

- the Research and Development Committee will continue to meet twice each year, reporting to the Board's June and December meetings;

- continuing efforts will be made to overcome deficiencies in the balance of staffing;

- the number of permanent staff will be reviewed;

- the four main approaches to research will continue;

- Centre commitment to staff development will continue;

- research projects will be selected according to agreed priority areas;

- the Centre will continue to be a vigorous applicant for research grants;

- the Centre will continue to fund at about the same level, ($100,000 to $150,000 per year) commissioned research and seed research. The procedures used in awarding these projects will continue;

- the process used to select research projects will continue;

- the Centre will continue to mount national workshops;

- the existing level of research dissemination effort will be maintained with some modification to techniques. The use of various techniques will be monitored for cost effectiveness;

- non-print approaches to dissemination will be investigated and trialled. An evaluation of how, and to what extent, Centre publications are used will be conducted;

- an evaluation of the Clearinghouse is being supported and a plan for the Clearinghouse's future and funding will be developed as a matter of priority;

- the Centre's main role will continue to be that of doing research and development of national significance for technical and further education. The Centre will continue to do this by working closely with the network, but especially with the Conference of TAFE Directors;

- the Centre will continue to give whatever support is appropriate to CPSG;

- the Centre's international reputation as an applied research organisation will be strengthened. The Centre will find ways to disseminate overseas research findings throughout TAFE. Centre staff will keep attuned to overseas developments;

. the Board has decided that plans should be made to move into more suitable accommodation by mid-1990.

APPENDICES

1. The Centre's aims

2. Processes for project approval

3. Management structure

4. Network

5. Board membership at 10.9.87

APPENDIX 1

AIMS

The Articles of Association list the Company's aims:

"(2) To carry out research and development programs to satisfy the needs of persons and authorities responsible for the provision of technical and further education in Australia.

(3) Without limiting the generality of paragraph (2) of this clause, carry out, co-ordinate and stimulate:

(a) research aimed at:

i) analysing the skills required for various occupations;

ii) designing, reviewing and evaluating technical and further education curricula and programs particularly those with national significance;

iii) investigating and preparing reports and recommendations on such topics related to technical and further education as the Company may from time to time direct;

(b) the planning and development of learning materials relevant for the needs of technical and further education;

(c) the evaluation, development and promotion of technological aids in education;

(d) the development of an informed national awareness of technical and further education research and development;

(e) liaison with authorities responsible for education and training within Australia and elsewhere for the purpose of collecting, assessing and disseminating material relating to technical and further education curricula and educational materials;

(f) the development of officers employed by Technical and Further Education Authorities within Australia in matters where the Company has particular expertise.

(4) To operate the facility known as "the National TAFE Clearinghouse"."

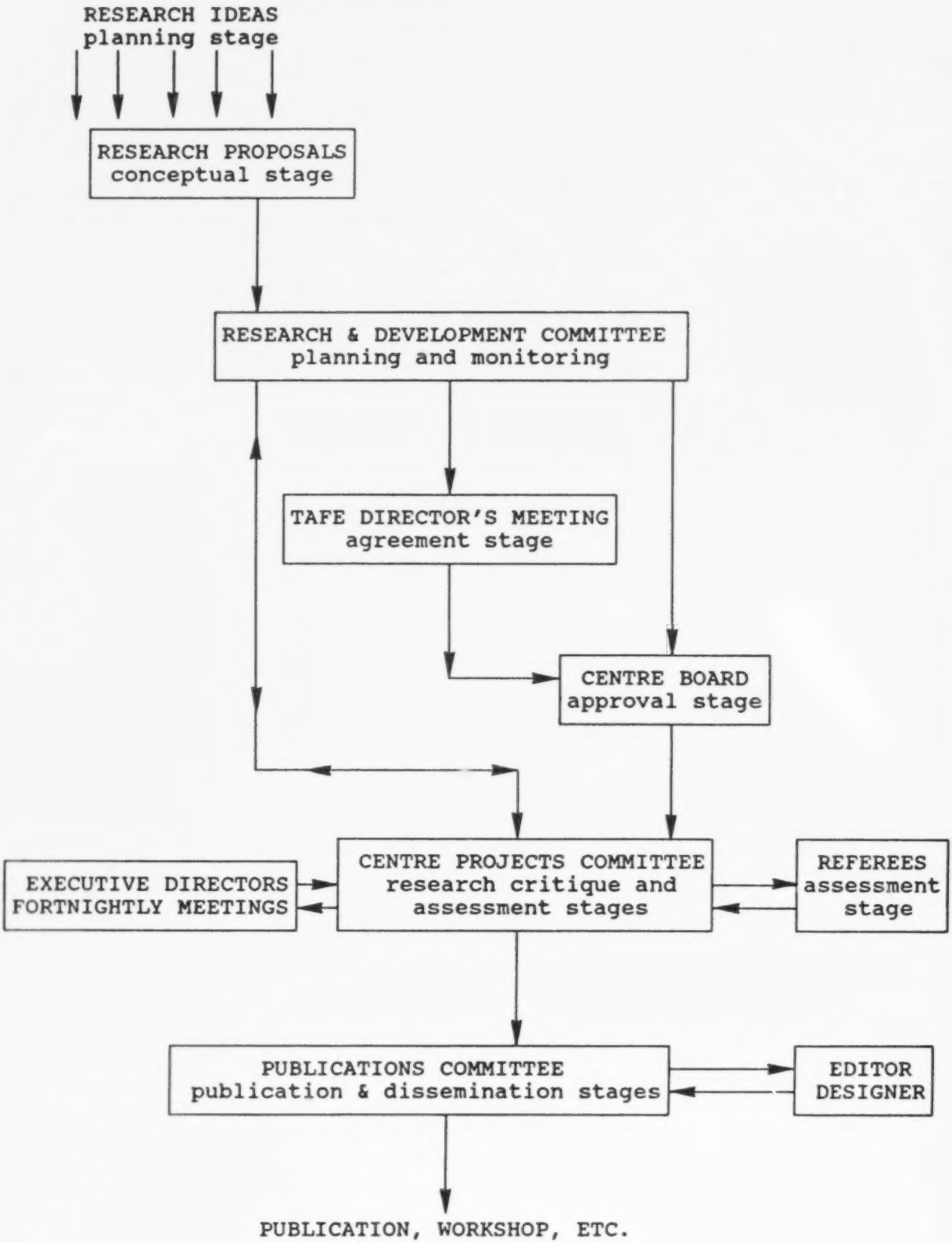
APPENDIX 2

Processes for project approval -

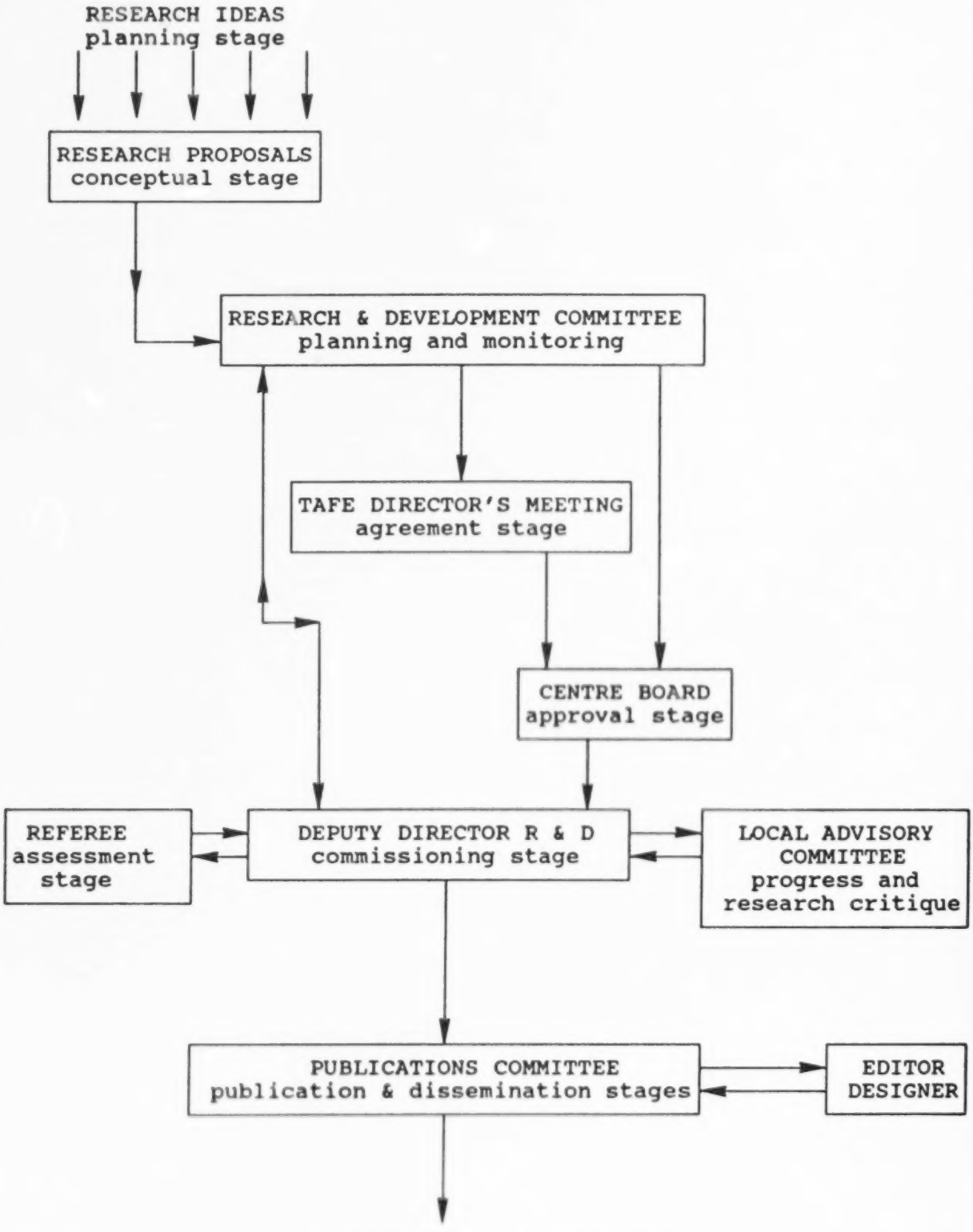
(a) in-house project

(b) commissioned projects

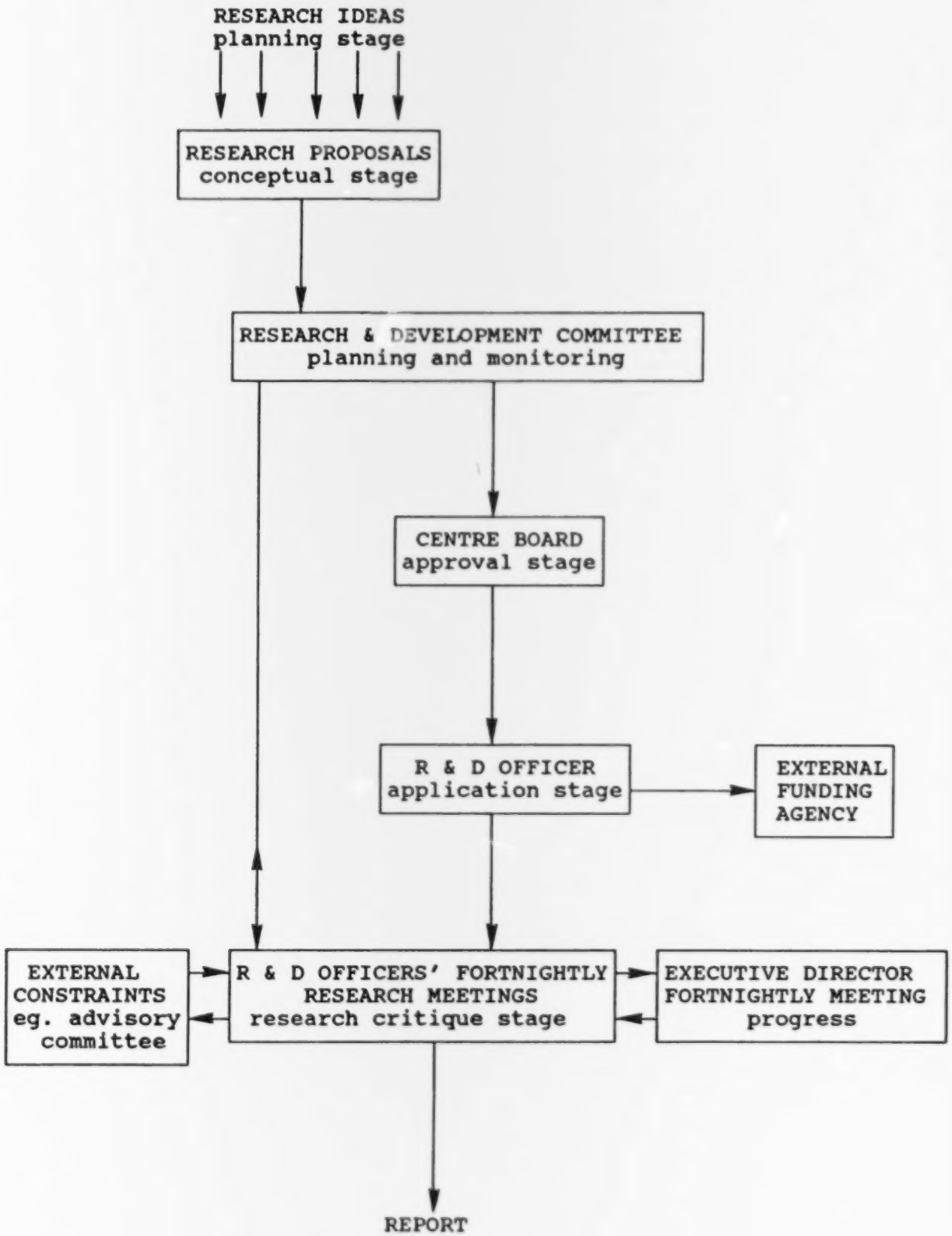
(c) externally funded projects.



In-house Projects

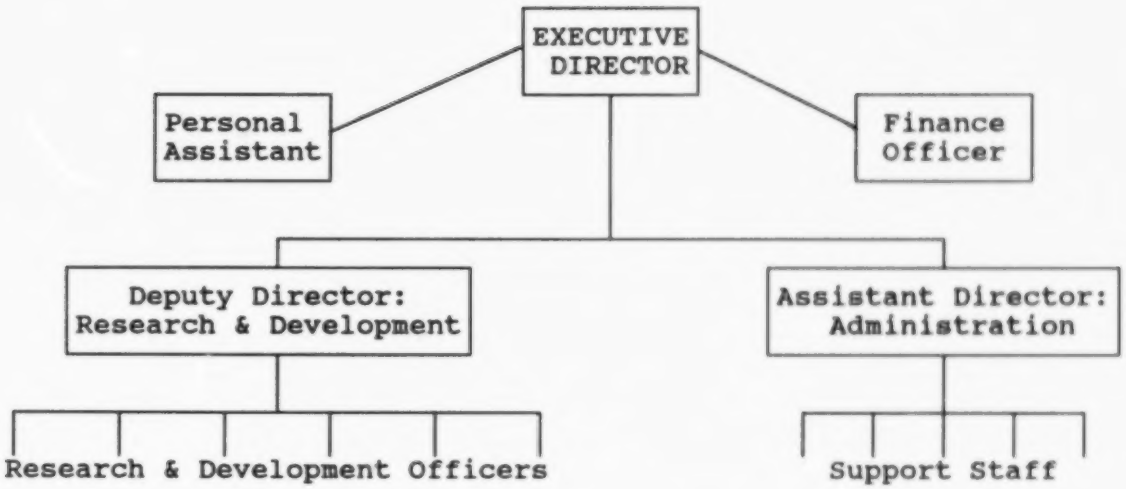


Commissioned Projects



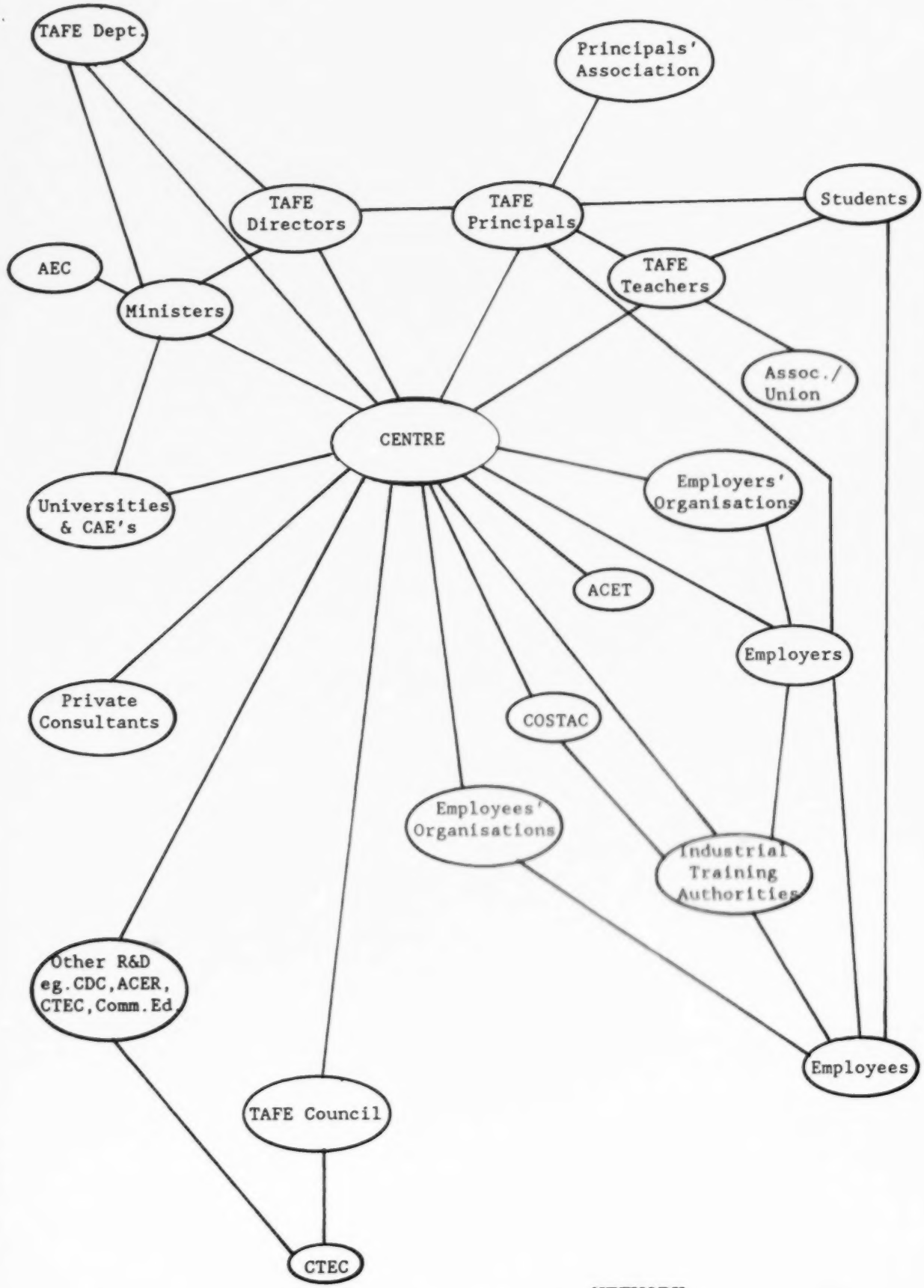
Externally Funded Projects

APPENDIX 3



Management Structure

APPENDIX 4



NETWORK

APPENDIX 5

BOARD MEMBERS

The following persons were Board members at 10th September, 1987:

(a) Persons who are eligible for membership of the Conference of Directors of TAFE:

- Mr R.N. Allen, Australian Capital Territory
  (2 September 1986 to 1 September 1989)
- Mr T.J. Leo, Tasmania
  (2 September 1985 to 1 September 1988)
- Mr L.P. Fricker
  (2 September 1987 to 1 September 1990)

(b) Persons actively engaged in commerce, industry or training:

- Mr E. Phelan, Queensland
  (re-appointed 2 September 1987 to 1 September 1990)
- Mr T.B. Prescott, AM, South Australia [Chairman]
  (re-appointed 2 September 1986 to 1 September 1989)
- Chief Executive Officer of a government training authority nominee -
  - Mr G.L. Mill, South Australia
    (re-appointed 2 September 1987 to 1 September 1990)
- Trade Union Movement nominee - vacant

(c) The Chairman of the TAFE Advisory Council:

- Mr D.M. Morrison, Australian Capital Territory
  (ex officio)

(d) The Executive Director of the Centre:

- Dr W.C. Hall, South Australia
  (ex officio)

(e) A TAFE Teacher - vacant

(f) A TAFE College Principal:

- Dr J.L. O'Sullivan
  (2 September 1987 to 1 September 1990).